

Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 25, 2020

Draft Minutes

The virtual meeting of the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority (VNECA) was called to order at 1:06 pm EDT on Wednesday, August 25, 2020 by chair Tom DePonty. A quorum of members were present, including DePonty, Bailey, Grecheck, Ball, Lempke, Kopple, Stuller, Agnew, Briscoe, Chappel, Tupper and Hutton. DMME staff attending the meeting included Brandi Frazier-Bestpitch, Larry Corkey, Jordan Burns and Barbara Simcoe. Grant Kronenberg from the Office of the Attorney General was also present on the recorded virtual call.

Larry Corkey read the General Assembly's virtual electronic meeting instructions, and a motion by Briscoe, seconded by Kopple which proposed that the meeting qualified as an electronic meeting was passed unanimously on a roll call vote by members present.

The March 4, 2020 meeting minutes were briefly discussed, and one minor change was proposed. On a motion by Hutton, seconded by Kopple, the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote. Other informational items were presented: the Governor signed all the nuclear-related bills passed by the General Assembly, and the webinar series held July 7 attracted over 80 participants who were asked for feedback on the proposed Draft Strategic Plan discussed below.

The main topic of discussion was the *Draft Virginia is Nuclear Strategic Plan* which must be submitted to the Governor's office by October 1, 2020. DMME had tasked the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium (VNEC) as a resource to create one or more workgroups exclusive of VNECA board members to develop the draft plan. April Wade (executive director, Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium), was applauded for her coordinated efforts on the document, and she led the discussion on proposed additions or revisions to be incorporated into a final document. Several suggestions were made by VNECA members:

- Add nuclear applications beyond the normal (e.g., hydrogen, thermal conversions)
- Emphasize deployment, leverage infrastructure and attributes to attract universities and companies with which to partner

- Define “carbon-free generation goal,” “CTE”, “for export”, “scientist”, “economic benefit of job creation”
- Build on infrastructure for global market and define rules for doing that
- Economic benefit of job creation needs further development

Members were instructed to submit comments and additional input to Brandi Frazier-Bestpitch at DMME by September 5, 2020, who will share with Ms. Wade for consolidation. Another VNECA virtual meeting will be held to review and vote on the final document approval.

Members then received a legislative update. The Nuclear Energy Legislative Act (NELA) was included in the Senate Defense bill, but not the House bill. There is a good chance it will be included during the House/Senate conference on the bill.

Other news was shared by members:

- Bailey is retiring at the end of 2020, so a replacement will need to be named by the Governor
- Agnew received approval to launch a new curriculum on nuclear engineering for undergraduates at UVA

A Doodle poll will be sent out to members by DMME staff to establish the next meeting date. Materials will also be posted on the VNECA website. Comments on the draft Plan should be received by Brandi Frazier-Bestpitch by September 5. (brandi.frazierbestpitch@dmme.virginia.gov).

Public comments were solicited, and a representative from the Sierra Club raised several issues that need further scrutiny, including aging nuclear fleets; climate change factors for which facilities are not equipped (hot water, flooding, storms); the need to focus on safety (floods, locations of facilities on fault lines); and the need to focus more on renewables.

As all business was completed, the meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m. EDT.